

2.15 RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND SELECTION

PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines for the recruitment, screening, and selection of applicants for employment within the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS).

AUTHORITY, INTERPRETATION, AND REVISION:

This SOP supersedes VDSS SOP 3, dated July 22, 1975, SOP 4, dated July 22, 1975, and SOP 21, dated March 15, 1983. The Director of the VDSS' Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) or designee, is responsible for the agency's interpretation of this SOP and for its revision or rescission.

2.15.1 Definitions

2.15.1.1 Addendum Interview List

List prepared by the VDSS/DHRM when an applicant's name was omitted in error from the original Referral List, Interview List, or Supplementary Interview List.

2.15.1.2 Complete Screening

At the request of the hiring authority, the VDSS/DHRM Generalist screens all applications in order to identify the most qualified applicants. An Interview List containing the names of the applicants to be interviewed and their applications are sent to the hiring authority. The hiring authority must interview all candidates on the Interview List.

2.15.1.3 Disposition Codes

Abbreviations used to indicate the final status of each referred applicant.

2.15.1.4 Interview List

List prepared by the VDSS/DHRM. It contains the names of applicants to be interviewed for the position.

2.15.1.5 Preliminary Screening

The VDSS/DHRM Generalist screens all applications in order to identify the applicants whose qualifications meet or exceed the minimum requirements for the position. A Referral List containing the names of those applicants and their applications are sent to the hiring authority for further consideration. The hiring authority determines which applicants will be offered an interview.

2.15.1.6 Recruitment Announcement

Job vacancy posting which contains position title and number along with other pertinent information (full-time/part-time/temporary; salary; position expiration date, if applicable); special requirements/preferences, if any; a brief duties and responsibilities paragraph; entry-level knowledge, skill, and ability statements (KSAs); announcement period closing date; and mailing address. For state positions, sometimes there is a notice of Completion of Economic Interest

Statement added. A disclaimer should always be included, stating the requirement for a [Criminal History Background Check](#).

2.15.1.7 Referral List

List prepared by VDSS/DHRM. It contains the names of applicants that the hiring authority may further consider in order to determine which applicants will be offered an interview.

2.15.1.8 Request to Advertise Position Form

[Form](#) submitted by the hiring authority to VDSS/DHRM when there is a need to advertise/fill a position.

2.15.1.9 Supplemental Interview List

List prepared by VDSS/DHRM at the request of the hiring authority when fewer than five applicants listed on the Interview List accept an interview. A Supplemental Interview List may also be issued if, after conducting interviews, the hiring authority is unable to select an applicant from the original Interview List.

2.15.2 Listing job announcements

All job announcements for vacant classified positions that are open to State Employees only, or Open Recruitment must be advertised in RECRUIT, except in the following situations:

1. Positions to be filled through Agency Internal Recruitment.
(Requires procedures be in place to notify all agency employees of such openings.)
2. Vacant positions available as placement or recall opportunities for employees affected by Layoff.
3. Positions to be filled by agency-initiated demotions, or temporary assignments, or employee-requested demotions, or lateral transfers.
(NOTE: Approval of employees' requests for lateral transfers or voluntary demotions is at the discretion of the Agency.)
4. Similar vacancies (same Role, duties/work title, organizational unit, and geographic area) that become vacant, or funded, within 90 calendar days from the position closing date of the similar vacancy. **(NOTE:** When such vacancy occurs and is not listed in RECRUIT, the hiring authority may only consider applications in the applicant pool for the previously recruited position.)
5. Positions to be filled by employees returning from leave (with or without pay, including VSDP), or placements resulting from job-related injuries, if the position is in a Role equal to or lower than the position held by the employee before the leave.

2.15.3 Applicant recruitment, screening, and selection

2.15.3.1 Posting Requirements

Job announcements must be listed in [RECRUIT](#) for a minimum of five consecutive workdays.

2.15.3.2 Types of Recruitment

- **Fixed Period**
A period of time such as one week, two weeks, etc., that the hiring authority chooses. If this option is selected;
 - (1) A closing date must be specified in the announcement, and
 - (2) All applications received by the closing date must be considered.
- **Open Until Filled**
Positions designated as “*Critical*” to the operations of the agency and meeting that definition may be posted as open until filled. If this method is used, a statement must be included in postings that indicate the date a position opened and that there is a minimum posting requirement of five consecutive workdays. This type of posting is restricted to positions contained within pay band six or higher.
- **Intra-agency**
Recruitment is limited to current permanent, probationary, and temporary (P-14) employees of the State Department of Social Services. Contract employees are excluded from applying.
- **Inter-agency**
Recruitment is limited to current permanent, probationary, and temporary (P-14) employees of any agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

2.15.3.3 Request to Advertise Position Form

- **Hiring Authority’s Role**
The hiring authority completes an up-to-date [Employee Work Profile \(EWP\) form](#), [Request to Advertise Position Form](#) (RTF) approved by Division Director, Justification Statement (JS), [Personnel Transaction Form](#) (PTF), Org. Chart and [Agency Hiring Request Form](#) and sends to VDSS/DHRM. If more than one position with the same Role title and position type (permanent, temporary; full-time or part-time) is being recruited for, a separate [EWP](#), [RTF](#), [PTF](#) and [Agency Hiring Request Form](#) must be submitted for each position. The hiring authority indicates on the [RTF](#) the type of applicant screening (refer all, preliminary or complete) that is desired.

NOTE: The Division of Licensing is exempt (per Executive Order 9, issued by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia) from obtaining the Secretary of Health and Human Services Approval and signature on the RTF.

- **VDSS/DHRM’s Role**
VDSS/DHRM checks all information for completeness and accuracy. Completed paperwork is forwarded to the Section’s office for approval.

2.15.3.4 Preparation of Recruitment Announcements, Closing Day and Time, and Extensions

- Preparation of Recruitment Announcements
VDSS/DHRM prepares the Recruitment Announcement, newspaper advertisement(s), coordinates a review of the announcement and newspaper advertisement with the hiring authority, and enters information into [RECRUIT](#), the Department of Human Resource Management's (DHRM) automated personnel system.
- Closing day and time
Recruitment Announcements prepared will generally close on a Friday at 5 p.m. unless requested otherwise by the hiring authority.
- Extensions
An announcement-posting period may be extended a minimum of five additional workdays at the discretion of the hiring authority.

2.15.3.5 Recruitment Announcement and Newspaper Advertisement

- Contents of Recruitment Announcements and Newspaper Advertisements
 1. Recruitment Announcements include the Role/Working title; position number; salary range, entry salary, or hourly rate of pay; if part-time, hours per week; and position location; statement about the type of recruitment for any position for which open recruitment is not being used; deadline date and time for receipt of applications; duties and responsibilities paragraph; special requirements, if any; notification of requirement for criminal history check, knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed for entry into the position; application instructions, and a statement that the agency is an equal opportunity employer.
 2. Newspaper advertisements include the Role/Working title; position number; salary range, entry salary, or hourly rate of pay; if part-time, hours per week; position location; statement about the type of recruitment for any position for which open recruitment is not being used; deadline date and time for receipt of applications; a brief duties and responsibilities paragraph; notification of criminal history background check; special requirements, if any; agency's website link; The knowledge, skill, ability statements (KSAs) may be included if classified advertising costs are not prohibitive.
- Restrictions on the use of Required Qualifications
Recruitment Announcements and newspaper advertisements may include preferred qualifications, but unless a job analysis supports a specific requirement, the desired qualifications should not be set forth so absolutely as to discourage otherwise qualified applicants from applying or automatically preclude applicants from consideration.
 1. Specific years of experience prohibited
Except where required by law or State Board policy, Recruitment Announcements and newspaper advertisements may not state a qualification for specific years of experience, but may state a qualification of related or applicable experience.
 2. Educational qualifications

Except where required by law or State Board policy, Recruitment Announcements and newspaper advertisements should not state absolute educational qualifications or use educational qualifications to preclude from consideration applicants who have equivalent or sufficient applicable experience or training.

3. Proficiency levels

Recruitment Announcements and newspaper advertisements may include proficiency levels that are reasonable and consistent with expectations of acceptable proficiency within the work force. An example of an acceptable proficiency level is a typing speed requirement for a secretarial position which typing is a significant component.

4. Occupational certification or license

Recruitment Announcements and newspaper advertisements should state occupational certification or licensing that is required by law.

- Approval for Bona Fide Occupational Qualifications (BFOQs)
Recruitment Announcements or newspaper advertisements may not include a BFOQ as a qualification requirement without the approval by VDSS/DHRM.

2.15.3.6 Application for Employment

A completed Commonwealth of Virginia “Application for Employment” must be submitted (mailed, faxed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered) for each position under recruitment. A facsimile, e-mail, or photocopied application is acceptable; however, the applicant must sign the application at the time of interview. The position number(s) and location must be entered on the application. Attachments to the completed “Application for Employment,” including a resume, will be considered during the screening process. The “Application for Employment” may be obtained from VDSS/DHRM, Virginia Employment Commission, or from the VDHRM’s website at <http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/employmentandcareers.html> or at <http://www.dss.state.va.us/geninfo/jobs.cgi>.

2.15.4 Testing or Use of Work Samples

This needs to be discussed and approved by VDSS/DHRM team prior to initiating.

2.15.5 Screening, Re-evaluation, Interviewing, Reference Checks, and Selection

The hiring authority may choose from three types of screening. The option selected is indicated on the Request to Advertise Position form.

- Refer All, Preliminary, and Complete Screening
 1. A VDSS/DHRM Generalist, using the Recruitment Announcement duties and responsibilities paragraph, entry-level knowledge, skill, and ability statements (KSAs), and special and/or preferred qualification(s) information, shall screen all applications received in response to the Recruitment Announcement.
 2. For “Refer All” screening, all applications are forwarded to the hiring authority for evaluation.

3. For “Preliminary” screening, a Referral List of all applicants who meet or exceed the minimum required and/or desired qualifications for the position and their applications is forwarded to the hiring authority for further consideration.
 4. For “Complete” screening, an Interview List of applicants who most closely possess the required and/or desired qualifications for the position and their applications is forwarded to the hiring authority.
- Application re-evaluation
 1. Re-evaluation by VDSS/DHRM
 - Any applicant whose name is not placed by VDSS/DHRM on a Referral List, Interview List, or Supplemental Interview List for a particular position may request a re-evaluation of his Application for Employment and all attachments. The request must be submitted in writing to VDSS/DHRM. It may be mailed or faxed.
 - A re-evaluation is performed by a VDSS/DHRM Generalist only if the hiring authority has not concluded interviews.
 - The VDSS/DHRM Generalist sends written notification of the re-evaluation results to the applicant.
 - If the re-evaluation results in a rating change and if the hiring authority initially selected the preliminary screening option, then another Referral List will be issued. The hiring authority then determines if the applicant will be offered an interview. If the complete screening option was initially selected, then an Addendum List is sent to the hiring authority, which shall ensure that the applicant is offered an interview.
 - Interviewing
 1. Interviews are a required step in the selection process. An interview panel or hiring authority conducts the interviews. Interview panels shall consist of individuals whose positions are contained within roles, which are equal to or higher than the role of the recruited position and should be comprised of a racially diverse group of members representing various minority populations.
 2. The Commissioner reserves the right to interview candidates in pay band six and above.
 3. The hiring authority may sit on the interview panel or permit the panel to recommend the top candidates for second interview with the hiring authority.
 4. VDSS/DHRM and the hiring authority are responsible for ensuring that the interview process is fair and consistent.
 5. The hiring authority has the discretion to select individuals to serve on an interview panel. It is important that the hiring authority ensure that panel members are familiar with the basic responsibilities of the position for which they will interview applicants, for it is the panelists’

responsibility to determine which applicants the hiring authority will interview.

6. An effort must be made to contact by telephone or in writing, if unable to reach by telephone, all applicants who have been judged eligible for an employment interview. However, the hiring authority is not required to reschedule interviews with applicants who are unable to make the scheduled interview.
7. The hiring authority and/or panel members develop a set of interview questions to be asked of each applicant. The questions should allow the interviewer(s) an opportunity to seek information related directly to the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities (KSAs) necessary to perform the job. Questions that are not job-related or that violate EEO standards are not permissible. The interviewer(s) may ask or answer questions in response to any statements or questions from the applicant or to clarify information provided by the applicant on the application.

- Reference checks

The hiring authority checks references with the current and former supervisor(s) of the applicant who is the final candidate for the position. The reference check, at a minimum, should obtain the following information: name, employment dates position title and duties, beginning and ending salaries, training completed, performance (work experience, KSA's, competencies), whether the employer would rehire the applicant and verification of any required license, certification, or degree.

- Selection

1. The hiring authority takes into consideration all information on the Application for Employment, the interview, and reference checks when determining the suitability of an applicant for employment. Race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sex, age, or other non-KSA information such as salary history or marital status, may not be used in the selection decision.
2. After a decision is made on determining the selected candidate, the hiring authority prepares a summary of the selection process, completes/submits the top candidate's application for employment, the [Compensation Decision Worksheet](#) (CDW, approved by Division Director and Budget), [Personnel Transaction Form](#) (PTF, approved by Division Director and budget), [Criminal History Background Check Form](#), Reference Check Form, Salary Verification and all back-up documentation (applications, questions, scores) and meets with their VDSS/DHRM team who reviews the selection process, salary calculation, and start date. The hiring authority shall provide to DHRM written verification of salary, employment dates and position title pertaining to the proposed selected individual's most current/relevant position for purposes of salary verification.

3. The hiring authority notifies the selected candidate after receiving notification from their VDSS/DHRM team that approval has been granted to employ by the Director of VDSS/DHRM and the selected candidate has successfully passed a criminal history background check and a Food Stamp check.
4. The hiring authority's VDSS/DHRM team sends the offer of employment letter under the hiring authority's signature.
5. The hiring authority's VDSS/DHRM team sends written notification to all applicants who were interviewed, but not selected. PROPOSED – Hiring authority sends these letters and provides DHRM with a copy after selection is finalized.
6. The hiring authority indicates the disposition status by each applicant's name on the Referral List, and returns the list and all applications to their VDSS/DHRM team.

2.15.5.1 Other Employment Requirements

Before an applicant is eligible for employment with the Commonwealth, several records must be reviewed or verified. This information is considered part of the application process, and as with information contained on the application form, if it is later discovered that an applicant falsified any information related to their employment, the employee's employment may be terminated.

- **Employment Eligibility/I-9**
Form I-9 must be completed for each newly hired employee within three days from the start date of employment as required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.
- **Child Support Inquiries**
Agencies must ask each new employee to disclose whether they have an income withholding order to pay child support as required by sections 20-79 and 63.1-250 of the Code of Virginia.
- **Selective Service**
All male applicants who apply for State positions must indicate on the State application whether they have registered for Selective Service as required by Section 2.1-32.1 of the Code of Virginia.

2.15.5.2 Application Retention

The following records must be maintained for a period of at least three years from the date the position is filled.

- Position description;
- Records related to recruitment efforts;
- Copies of advertisements;
- Employment applications;
- Race and gender data on all applicants;
- Screening and selection criteria applied; and
- Interview questions and notes on applicant responses.